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David McCrone
Head of Price Control Operations Policy
Ofgem
10 South Colonnade
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Dear David,

Cadent Response - Consultation on a proposal to update the Vulnerability and Carbon Monoxide Allowance (VCMA) Governance Document

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the Ofgem consultation on the proposed changes to the VCMA Governance Document. This response is made on behalf of Cadent and can be published by Ofgem.

Prior to these proposed changes, the eligibility criteria for essential gas appliance servicing required the occupier to have a health condition and be receiving means-tested benefits. Cadent and the other Gas Distribution Networks (GDNs) were encountering consumers that should have been, but were not for whatever reason, on any means-tested benefits. This meant that some vulnerable consumers were not eligible for support through the VCMA. The proposed changes to the governance document address this by requiring the occupier to have either a health condition or be in receipt of means-tested benefits.

Furthermore, previously the criteria for gas appliance servicing was different from the eligibility criteria for essential gas appliance repair and replacement. The criteria for the latter was more restrictive as it did not consider the health condition of the occupier. The proposed changes now bring consistency between the criteria for gas appliance servicing and gas appliance repair and replacement.

The criteria for both was acting as a deterrent and prevented vital support to vulnerable consumers. Cadent is therefore supportive of the proposed changes to widen the eligibility criteria for VCMA projects for the servicing, repair and replacement of essential gas appliances.

Please contact me should you wish to discuss any aspect of this consultation response.

Yours sincerely,

Guv Dosanjh
Social Programmes Manager

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Cadent